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A
BELIEVER's
Evidences for HEAVEN:
OR, A
Short ESSAY
FOR
Christian Comfort,
OR
SPIRITUAL JOY.

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Wherein, by the plainest and most familiar Expressions, a weak Christian may be able to make out his Title to the heavenly Inheritance; or to make his *Calling and Election* sure. Sincerely attempted, in order to enlarge the Heart of a true Christian, to run the Ways of God's Commandments; and render the Yoke of Christ easy, and his Burden light; and make Way for a true Believer's comfortable Death.

Isa. xl. 1. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my People, saith your God—
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem.* —

1 Thess. v. 14. *Now we exhort you, Brethren, warn them that
are unruly, comfort the Feeble-minded, support the Weak.*

1 Cor. xiii. 5. *Examine your selves, whether you be in the Faith,
prove your own selves.*

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BELLER'S

Evidences for Heaven

OR A

Short Essay

IN

Christian Comfort

OF

SEVENTEENTH

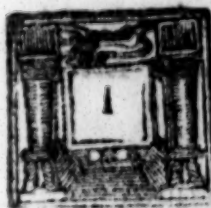
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T H E Introduction.



IN my Conversation with some serious Christians, I have been ready to think, that some of them lie under this sad Mistake, to suppose, that a good Part of Christian Religion consists in *Doubts and Fears*; or that it is a *Virtue* to be almost always complaining: But whatsoever Place these may take in a Christian's Life; yet to be always doubting and complaining, is the Way to bring up an *evil Report* of the good Way of God, and to strengthen others in their Prejudices against them. A Christian cast down, is like an Instrument of Musick out of Tune, which, till it is set in Order, will make no good Musick; so is a Christian under Fears and Doubts, unfit to praise God, or to comfort or strengthen others; for he forgets former Mercies, and calls in Question those that are to come; thus God is much dishonoured, and Religion, his own Soul, and others, suffer by his evil Frame. Therefore there ought to be Room in the Heart of every Child of God, for *rejoicing in the Lord, and joying in the God of their Salvation*; to *rejoice in Christ Jesus*; and to *rejoice, that our Names are written in the Book of Life.*

Life. I confess, that many a dear Child of God, that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the Voice of his Servant, may walk in Darkness, and have no Light, Isa. l. 10. But this Darkness of God's own Children, may be much owing to themselves. They labour after the Death of Sin; but they do not see it their Duty to labour after Comfort. I am well satisfied, if true Believers saw it to be their Duty to rejoice in the Lord, and to rejoice in Christ Jesus, they would take more Care about it; because as their Hearts are upright with God, they have Respect to all his Commandments. To shew that it is their Duty, we need to add but that one plain, express Command, Phil. iv. 4. *Rejoice in the Lord always; and again, I say, rejoice.* It is for this End, among others, that we have that Charge left with us, 2 Pet. i. 10. *Give all Diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.* Wherein observe;

- I. That there is such a thing as Election.
- II. That the Knowledge of it is attainable; for the Knowledge of its undoubted Fruits and Effects have been, and is still, obtain'd and enjoy'd by many, as is evident by such Expressions as these: *We know that we are passed from Death to Life. The Crown of Life, which God, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that Day.*
- III. That some, even of the Brethren, may be at a Loss about their Interest in it.
- IV. That it is the Duty of the Brethren, or of all Believers, to give all Diligence to obtain the Knowledge of it.
- V. That proper Means must be made use of, in order to obtain it. As,

i. We

1. We must pray for the Guidance and Assistance of the Spirit of God, whose Work it is as the Spirit of Grace, to bring Souls into an Estate of Grace ; and then, as the Spirit of Adoption, *to witness with their Spirits, that they are the Children of God.*

2. We must diligently study the Word of God ; that's the best Means to acquaint us with God's Way of Salvation of Sinners ; or in what Order *God brings his Sons to Glory* ; and what Characters they bear, that are true Citizens of *Zion.*

3. We must carefully search and examine our own Hearts, and their working, and what is the Bent of our Souls ; which Way the Byass of our Affections leans, whether towards Sin and Vanity, or towards God, Jesus Christ, and Holiness ? Whether a Name to live, and a Form of Godliness, will satisfy us ; or whether we are truly concern'd about the Life and Power of Religion, and the Savour and transforming Virtue of divine Truths on our Hearts ? This is the Way to know our effectual Calling ; and that, again, will clear up our being chosen of God to Salvation. But let it be observed, that though the Heart may not yet be thus working towards God, we must not conclude from thence, that such are not chosen to Salvation ; no, we have no such Warrant from the Word of God. But I have to do with those that are effectually called to Faith in Jesus Christ, who find these Workings of Heart towards God more or less, yet may remain under Doubts and Fears about their Estate : Which Fears may proceed either,

I. From a dull, heavy, natural Temper : A melancholy Constitution is commonly attended with Doubts and Fears.

II. They may be a Fruit of Negligence; which may be one Occasion of that necessary Charge: *Give all Diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.* Many declare, that their Darkness is a great Trouble to them; yet do not labour hard to get Comfort; though, I confess, spiritual Comfort doth not depend altogether upon our Diligence; yet is very seldom, if ever, obtained without it.

III. Believers Doubts and Fears may proceed from their Ignorance; for some are ready to think, that where true Grace is wrought in the Heart, they should find little else but *Grace* there. But such must observe, that there are three Estates of Men.

1. An Estate of *Nature*. Then Sin reigns with very little Disturbance. *The strong Man armed keeps the Palace in Peace.*

2. An Estate of *Glory*. There Grace shall reign without any Opposition. But,

3. There is an Estate of *Grace*, which is the present Estate of Believers. Then Grace reigns in the Heart and Life; but Grace being but weak, and Corruption strong, *the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit*, as well as *the Spirit against the Flesh*; and ever will do so, till Grace hath wrought out all Corruption from the Soul, which it will certainly do; for *Grace* is like *Mordecai*, and *Sin* like *Haman*; Grace is of the *Seed-Royal*; therefore how strong soever Sin may be at present, it must fall before it. Grace is like the House of *David*, and Corruption like the House of *Saul*, 2 Sam. iii. 1. though they may be obstinately contending for a while, yet *the House of David shall wax stronger and stronger, and the House of Saul shall wax weaker and weaker*. Some, through their Ignorance, are ready to fear, that they have no true Faith; because they find

so much Unbelief remaining and working in them. But such must remember, that all the Children of God are not of the same Stature. Some, like *Abraham*, are *strong in Faith*; or like that Woman, to whom our Lord said, *O Woman, great is thy Faith*. Others, like the true Disciples of Christ, are of *little Faith*: To whom that Question might be put, which Christ put to his Disciples, *Where is your Faith?* He knew they had Faith in their Hearts, but not in Exercise. Others fear they have no true Love to Jesus Christ; because they are not taken enough with him. If this is truly thy Grief, thou lovest Christ, though thou dost not love him as thou wouldst; thou may'st be sure thy Love will be perfected. Others question the Truth of their Repentance, because they think their Sorrow for Sin has not gone deep enough; if it has not gone so deep in thy Soul, as in some others, that may be thy Mercy on some Accounts; but has it gone deep enough to im-bitter Sin to thee? and to bring thee, as a poor, guilty, unclean, lost Soul, to Jesus Christ, for whole Salvation; and to make thee watch and war against it? If so, thy Desire of more is but a Temptation. Grief for Sin doth not come all at once; neither doth it proceed only from our looking upon Sin; but from our looking upon Jesus Christ crucified by Faith. *Zech. xii. 10. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c.* Deep Sorrow for Sin comes also from a Sense of the Mercy and Love of God in Christ, as extended to such a sinful Soul; therefore as Faith grows, so will Sorrow for Sin. Others question their Humility and Sincerity; because they feel some Motions of Pride and Hypocrisy in their Hearts; it is a Mercy that thy Heart is so faithful as to observe, and hate their Motions; it's a Sign of the Holiness of thy Heart, in that it is grieved.

on that Account; it cannot bear that which is evil.

Many weak Christians question, whether they are ever like to get safe to Heaven; because they find in themselves so little *Meetness* for the Place, or its Work and Enjoyments. To which I may answer, that as the Infant is not presently a Man; no more is the new Creature presently made perfect.

In the Family of God, there are *little Children* and *Babes in Christ*; and being Children of God, are intitled to all the Childrens Portion. They are Children in *Knowledge*, yet they know the Father. They are Children in *Grace*, yet their *Sins* are pardoned. And being Children, they are *Heirs of Glory*. The great Creator of the World did not finish his Work all in one Day; nor doth he, as the God of Grace, bring a Soul all at once, to a perfect Man in Christ. Though he works all our Works in us, and for us; yet he leaves Room for us to pray, and wait for further Degrees of Grace and Strength, in the Way of his Ordinances.

If any of the things beforementioned are thy Doubts and Fears, then put such Petitions into thy Prayers: *Lord, increase our Faith. Lord, I believe, help thou my Unbelief.*

And as thy Fears may arise from thy Ignorance, let that be the Matter of thy Prayer: *What I know not, teach thou me.*

And when thou art afraid thou shalt come short of Heaven, because thou hast so little *Meetness* for it; think how thou wouldst answer a Child, that might be discouraging himself thus: *O, I fear I shall never be a Man; because I have so little Skill and Strength for the Work of a Man.*

Poor, humble Soul, who made thee meet for any Parts of thy present Work, by giving thee Knowledge of, and an Heart inclin'd to any religious Exercises? The same God of Grace that
hath

hath appointed to his little Flock a Kingdom; will make them meet for it. *1 Col. xii. Giving Thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.*

Grace in Truth, though weak, is Meetness for Heaven; and we shall be more meet, when Grace shall be perfected.

Some are afraid they shall come short of Heaven; because it is said, *1 Pet. iv. 18. That the Righteous are scarcely saved.* I answer, the Apostle doth not speak there of *Soul-Salvation*, but of temporal Deliverance from a temporal Calamity, *i. e.* of the Deliverance of the Faithful from the common Calamity that beset the Jewish Nation, by the Romans destroying their City Jerusalem, &c. under the Conduct of *Titus Vespasian*, about forty Years after Christ. It pleased God to save some, by inclining them to hearken unto a Voice he sent them from Heaven, *Go to Pella*; they that hearkned not to it, fell in the common Calamity. The Context makes it very plain; for,

1. It is said, *Ver. 12.* that God's Design in bringing his People under that great Judgment was, to try them, not to destroy them.

2. They are bid, not to think that some strange thing happened to them. It was something that other Children of God had gone through before them: And so is near of Kin to that Text, *1 Cor. x. 13. No Temptation hath overtaken you but such as is common to Man, &c.*

3. These are said to be *Christ's Sufferings*, *Ver. 13. i. e.* something that they were to undergo for the sake of Christ, and the Gospel of Christ.

4. They are bid to rejoice in them, *Ver. 13.* that they should be so honoured, as to suffer for the Cause of Jesus Christ.

5. The Kind of the Suffering, in one Branch of it, is express'd, *Ver. 14. If ye are reproached for the Name of Christ.*

6. They

6. They are directed how to behave themselves under the Trial, *Ver.* 16. namely, with Courage becoming Christians suffering in a good Cause: *If any suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but glorify God on this Behalf.*

7. The Godly in their Afflictions and Sufferings are bid to commit the keeping of their Souls to God, as to a faithful Creator, i. e. Preserver. God hath not exempted his own dear Children from the fiery Trial of outward Afflictions; but hath promised better things.

First, That he will be with them in their Afflictions. *Isa.* xliii. 2. *Fear not; for I am with thee, when thou pass'st through the Waters, when thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee.*

Secondly, God hath promised to do his People Good by their Afflictions: *Verily, I will do thee Good.* This the Saints experience, *Rom.* viii. 28. *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his Purpose.*

I will add but this one Consideration more, to the Answer already given to the last supposed Ground of Fear; that is, lest the Soul should miss of Heaven; because it is said, that *the Righteous are scarcely saved.* And I think it sufficient to stand of it self. It is this:

To say, that the Souls of the Righteous are scarcely saved from Hell, would reflect Dishonour upon the Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour. For whence arises the Difficulty of their souls Salvation? Doth the Wisdom or Power of Jesus Christ fail? Or are his Merits too short? Or is his Fountain of Grace like to be dry? No, *He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him.* Let their Enemies be never so strong, numerous, watchful, and crafty; or let the Subjects of his saving Grace be never so weak and

un-

unworthy; yet Jesus Christ can, and will save them gloriously.

Some are afraid they shall miss of Heaven; because their Sins have not only been many, but have been attended with such Aggravations, that they fear they have sinned the Sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall never be forgiven, *Matth. xii. 31, 32.* for, they think, *they have sinned wilfully, after they had received the Knowledge of the Truth.* And they read, *Heb. x. 26.* *That there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sin; but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries.* To this we must answer, that every great Sin is not the Sin against the Holy Ghost; nor every great Sin committed against Light, nor every Sin against the Spirit of God, is not the unpardonable Sin. But it is a Sin whereby Jesus Christ, and his one Sacrifice is left, by any Professor of the Christian Religion, that is the *Sinning wilfully*; and when Men leave the one Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, there is no other Sacrifice available to take away Sin. The Meaning is not, that if any Professor be guilty of presumptuous Sin, after they have received the Knowledge of the Truth, then there is no Room for their Sacrifice, *i. e.* Prayer, &c. But if Christ's Sacrifice be left, there is no other Sacrifice appointed of God to take away Sin.

The Sin against the Holy Ghost, is an hypocritical Professor's despitefully casting off his professed Subjection to Jesus Christ, and Faith in the Doctrines of Christ; and contemning God's only Way of Salvation of Sinners, through the Blood and Merits of Christ, and maliciously speaking and acting against Jesus Christ, and his Holy Spirit, Heb. x. 28, 29. When I have been possess'd with such Fears, I have satisfied myself thus:

1. My

1. My Conscience bears me Witness, that I am sincere with God. This hath been, and is mighty Relief to me; because *none but Hypocrites* commit this Sin.

2. I heartily approve of God's Way of Salvation by Faith in Christ's Righteousness, and in a constant Course of Obedience and Holiness; I do not, I cannot leave Jesus Christ; but desire to live on him for all Savation.

3. I cannot speak contemptibly and reproachfully of Jesus Christ, or of any of his Doctrines or Ordinances, nor bear to hear others do so. I would not entertain one low, or unworthy Thought of Jesus Christ, or of the Spirit of God, or any of his Works.

4. I am glad when I can do any thing to proclaim the Greatness and Goodness of Jesus Christ, or do any thing that may spread his Name, and promote his Kingdom, or put Souls upon Enquiry after him.

I conclude also, that I *never shall* sin that Sin; because I am born of God, and have the Seed of his especial Grace in my Heart. *1 John iii. 9. Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit Sin; for his Seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin; because he is born of God. He doth not, cannot sin, as he used to do, to make a Trade of it, and to do it with Delight. But especially, he cannot sin to Death. God hath not engaged any where in his Word, to keep his People from sin; but he will keep them from such Sin as might shut them out of Heaven. 2 Tim. iv. 18. The Lord shall deliver me from every evil Work, and will preserve me to his heavenly Kingdom.*

The Design of the following Pages is, to correct such Mistakes as have now been taken notice of, and to set a sincere Believer in the Way, how to think right about his Estate, his Way, his Work, and his End; and thereby to prevent many hurrying

rying Fears and Doubts, that often distract the Minds, and weaken the Hearts and Hands of the Children of God, in the Way of their Duty ; and to enlarge their Hearts for Praise, Service, and Obedience to God. As the Things herein contain'd were design'd, not for full Stomachs, but for hungry Souls, I have taken more Thought of the Matter, than of the Manner of Expression. And that Method best answers our present Design, that may, with most Ease, and the greatest Plainness, direct doubting Souls where to find an Answer directly suited to their Questions.

While I have taken Care to give the Children their Bread, I have also taken care to crush those two great Enemies of Souls and Christian Religion, *viz. spiritual Sloth and carnal Security*. Some Fears on that Side held my Hands for a while, from exposing these to the View of others, which first were design'd but for my own Use. But we can neither do nor say any thing, which a deceitful Heart is not ready, like the Spider, with his filthy Nature, to convert and change all into Poyson. If we are careful to give the Children their Bread, the Dogs are ready to run away with it. We cannot tell in what Terms to set forth the Misery of unconverted Sinners ; but the humble Disciples of Christ are ready to take all Home to themselves. And we cannot tell how to speak for the Comfort of sincere Christians, but bare Professors will catch at it, as all their own. But if any will please themselves with these things, who know no Change of Heart and Life, nor are careful about Holiness ; be it at their Peril to build an House upon the Sand : Such false Hopes, as they do not better their Estate now ; so they will leave them sadly disappointed, and ashamed at last. There is one thing more I advertize the Reader of ; and that is, that as some of these Evidences may interfere, and some things be mentioned more than

than once or twice, under differing Heads, the Design of that was, that as one Particular might serve to clear up two or three Things, as well as one, [as is clear in Scripture, as to the Particulars of Faith and Love, &c. For Faith is an Evidence,

1. Of our being ordained to eternal Life. *Acts* xiii. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed.*

2. Of our Justification, or the Pardon of our Sins. *Acts* xiii. 39. *He that believeth is justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the Law of Moses.*

3. Of our Adoption. *1 John* xii. *As many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to as many as believed on his Name.*

4. Of Heaven. *Mark* xvi. 16. *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.*]

I say, I have taken this Liberty, that the particular thing immediately under Consideration, might lie the plainer before the Reader, without References to other Pages; which would too much interrupt the Reading; especially to those that are not very ready at finding out the Pages and Heads, that might have been necessary to have referred unto. I have often found, that something of this Nature has been of Use to sincere, but doubting Christians: And I have found them of good Use to my own Soul; if they may be so to thine, let God have the Glory, and he hath his best End, who is thy Soul's Friend, and desires to be an Helper of thy Joy.



A BELIEVER's Evidences for Heaven.



WHEN a sincere Christian seriously puts this weighty Question to himself: *Shall I go to Heaven, or not?* There is but here and there one that can give himself a satisfactory Answer to it. They are well satisfied of their Sincerity; but having so little Grace, and so much Corruption; so many Enemies, and so little Strength; so much, and so difficult Work, and so little Ability for it; that though they heartily determine to keep in the Ways of God, yet how things may end with them, they are very much at a Loss. They know, that *he that continues to the End shall be saved*. But they fear, lest their treacherous Hearts should depart from God.

God. This Fear prevails; because they forget, or are too little acquainted with the Nature of God's new Covenant; whereby a Believer's Relation to God, and his Interest in his Covenant Mercies, are effectually, eternally secured. Jer. xxxii. 4. *I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my Fear in their Hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* The best Way to bring sincere Christians to rejoice, in Hope of the Glory of God, is to shew them:

- I. That they have saving Grace wrought in their Hearts; that *they have received the first Fruits of the Spirit*; that the Spirit of Grace hath wrought in them the things that accompany Salvation; Such things as are the Beginnings of eternal Life.
 - II. That where God hath begun a good Work, there he will preserve it to the Day of Jesus Christ; for his Gifts and Callings are without Repentance; that the Lord will perfect that which concerneth his Peoples Salvation. When God hath marry'd any Soul to himself, he hateth putting away.
- That I shall go to Heaven, I prove thus to myself: *Those that have received the things that accompany Salvation, they shall go to Heaven: But I have received the things that accompany Salvation; therefore I shall go to Heaven.*
- That they shall go to Heaven that have received the things that accompany Salvation, is proved by the Word of God. Psal. xiii. 8. *The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me.* Phil. i. 6. *Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good Work in you, will perform it to the Day of Jesus Christ.* This Confidence of a true Believer, is founded on the Unchangeableness of God, and the

the unalterable Settlement of God's Covenant; *which is ordered in all things, and sure*; whereby a true Believer's Salvation is secured, even at such Times as it may not go well with his Frame of Heart, no more than with his House.

That I have obtained the things that accompany Salvation, I satisfy my self thus:

I am effectually, savingly taught of God.

I am brought from Death to spiritual Life.

I do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am justify'd, my Sins are pardon'd.

I am, in some Measure, truly sanctified.

I have a Covenant-Relation to God.

I do love God and Jesus Christ in Sincerity.

These are the Reasons of my Hope of Heaven; and these Particulars will fill up the remaining *Pages*.

The *first* Evidence for Heaven is, my being effectually, savingly taught of God. And I conclude my Knowledge is saving,

I. Because it makes me humble and low in my own Thoughts. I can no longer cry up the Goodness of my Heart; for I see more and more of the Evil that dwells in it; hence I count my self *less than the least of all Saints*; for I am ready to think, that no Heart hath so much Evil in it as mine. Yet I trust my Heart is not wicked; for though there is Sin in it, yet it doth not allow of, and delight in Sin.

I am nothing in my self; I have nothing that is good, but what I borrow from another, even from the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom I look for all, Wisdom, Grace, Strength, and Holiness. I heartily like, and embrace the Truths of God, as he hath revealed them, as to the Matter and Manner. I like those Doctrines that carry in them just Matter of humbling to proud Man; such as shew me my corrupt Nature; my Guilt and Defilement, my Inability to help and save my self; my Need

of Jesus Christ, and his Righteousness, for Pardon, Peace, Holiness, Strength, and Life. I own, that I have my Sight, my Healing, my Life, my Cloathing, my Food, and my Riches, from him, and all freely.

I humbly wait on God in his Ordinances, and through them, look to God himself for all Supplies of Grace. And when I obtain any thing from God through them, I take Care to give him all the Glory; for I own that all I enjoy is from his gracious Hand. I do not think that my Stock of Grace received, or my Hatred of Sin, or my Love of Holiness, and my best Resolutions, all put together, are sufficient to carry me out to the steady Practice of Godliness, without the especial Assistance of the Spirit of God; yet I trust that my Weakness shall not discourage me from my Work; but the rather encourage me to go to God in Christ, by his Spirit, to work all my Works in me, and for me. Thus I have found, that *when I am weak, then I am strong*; Jesus Christ worketh all my Works in me, and for me.

I labour to bring my very Heart to rest in the Conduct of his Providence towards me; when God corrects, I pray for Subjection to the Father of Spirits. I labour to keep down every evil Thought of any thing that God doth; and when they rise in my Heart, they are a Trouble to me, that, at any Time, I have any unworthy Thoughts of God under Afflictions.

When God smiles on me, I remember my own Unworthiness, my Shortness in his Service, my remaining Corruptions. I own the free Kindness of God to me, in bringing me from Darkness to Light; for I was born blind, I was sometime foolish, and ignorant of my self, of God, of Jesus Christ, and spiritual things; but now, being made *Light in the Lord*, I study in all things to walk as one of the *Children of Light*.

II. I conclude, my Knowledge is saving Knowledge; because through it I have been inabled to take up my Rest in Jesus Christ for whole Salvation. Hence I gather, that it is that very sort of Knowledge that God had promised to his People, in his new Covenant. *Isai. liv. 13. All thy Children shall be taught of the Lord. Jer. xxxi. 34. They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.* For thus it is explained by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, *John vi. 45. It is written in the Prophets, and they shall be all taught of the Lord; every Man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh to me, [i. e. believeth in me.]* I find my Soul drawn to Jesus Christ; I desire no other Rest and Refuge for my Soul; I am satisfied in him; here I cast the Anchor of my Hope. I take Jesus Christ, as God presents him, for *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*: And I heartily submit my self to him as my Lord, as well as hope in him as a compleat Saviour. I cannot satisfy my self that I have so much, or so clear Knowledge of the Things of God, as that therewith I may hang out a Sign of Religion, or keep up a creditable Profession therewith; but my Care is, that it may lead me to live on Christ's Fulness of Grace, that I may receive more Grace from him, and more Likeness to him, and be more taken up with him, and that Grace may command my Heart, and Life, and Time, for him.

III. I conclude my Knowledge is saving Knowledge; because it is the Concern of my Soul to obey God in all things, that he makes known as his Will to me. *1 John ii. 3. Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.* I know, and own that I serve God but poorly; but my Heart is set upon it. My Conscience tells me, I am sincere; I desire not to omit, or be excused of any Part of God's revealed Will; I like

it all, and all the Christian's Work; mark'd out by it. My Heart does not say, *I pray thee have me excused*; but that Prayer of David is the very Desire of my Soul: *Psal. cxix. 4, 5. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy Precepts diligently. O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes.* I am best pleased with my self, when I am best prepared for, and most inclined to the Service of God. I have dedicated my self to God, and to his Service; and I desire never to draw back, but to serve him every where, in every Thing, and at all Times; for *I have sworn, and, by his Grace, I will perform it, that I will keep his righteous Judgments.* As the continued Practice of Sin, with Allowance and Delight, will evidence any one to be a Servant of Sin, and the Devil. *John viii. 44. Ye are of your Father the Devil; for the Lusts of your Father ye will do.* So my serious, constant Practice of Religion with Delight, must evidence my being a true Servant of God, *Rom. vi. 16, 17. I love the Master, I count his Interest my own. I love his Work, I count it my Honour and my Freedom. I love the Laws of the House, and strive to keep them strictly; and I am well pleased with the Wages that he gives his Servants, even while they are sincerely doing his Work. Psal. xix. 11. In keeping his Commandments there is great Reward.* I study to approve my self God's faithful Servant in every thing. I conclude then, that I shall dwell with God in Heaven, there to serve him better than I am able to do here. *Rev. xxii. 3. There ——— his Servants shall serve him.* Here I serve God so poorly, that what I do, tho' it is done sincerely, yet is hardly worth the Name of Service; because it is so short, and so sinful; But there I shall serve him without Sin, without Distraction, without Weariness, and without End. Upon the whole, I conclude I shall have
eternal

eternal Life. *John xvii. 3. This is Life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*

The *second* Evidence for Heaven is, my being brought from Death to Life. If I now have spiritual Life, I shall have eternal Life. I conclude I have spiritual Life,

I. Because I am effectually called. I am not now as once I was, unconcerned about my Soul, and its Salvation; for God, by his Word and Spirit, hath shewn me my Sinfulness, and my Misery and Danger by Sin, and made me sensible of the Worth of my precious Soul, and brought me to be concerned for its Salvation above all things. He hath made me *willing in the Day of his Power*, to cast my Soul, and all its Concerns, on Jesus Christ, upon that Report that God hath given of him in the Gospel. Hereupon I conclude, I have Jesus Christ, and so have Life; for *he that hath the Son of God hath Life*; and he that believes on him hath him; and he that rests on him for Righteousness, Holiness, and Salvation, he believes on Jesus Christ.

II. I conclude I have spiritual Life; for I am saved from the Power and Dominion of Sin. I own, that Sin dwells in me, and that I hardly do any thing without Sin; its dwelling in me is my Trouble; but my Comfort is, that Sin hath lost its reigning Power over me; for,

i. My old Delight in Sin is taken away. In Time past, Sin dwelt very easy and quiet in my Soul. *The strong Man armed, kept the Palace of my Heart in Peace*; and then I let Sin have my Hands, my Eyes, my Tongue, my Feet, my Thoughts, my Will, my Desires, my Time, and my Strength; but now I desire to have nothing more to do with Sin, but in Heart and Life to obey the Laws of

God. Once I loved Sin, and then it reigned over me; for the Love of Sin is the Life of Sin; and the Life of Sin is the Death of the Soul: But now, through Grace, I hate it, and desire my Hatred of Sin may grow exceedingly. Hence I conclude, that I have spiritual Life.

2. I mourn over, and bewail the Remainder of Sin in me, and I ask Help of God against it. In-dwelling and actual Sins are my Grief, and it troubles me much sometimes, that I can grieve no more for Sin. While it is so near to me, I do not make a League with it; but resolve, in the Strength of Christ, to keep a Sword drawn against it, till it is out of the Power of Sin to hurt me. It sometimes hinders me from my Work, and oftner disturbs and distracts me in it; but I watch against it, and take Care to improve every Ordinance and Providence of God, for the Death of Sin, and my Growth in Grace and Holiness.

Hence I conclude, that Sin shall never more get Dominion over me, *Rom. vi. 14.* And that I shall one Day be set free from the very Being of Sin. And hence also I believe, I shall get safe to Heaven: Sin shall never prove my Ruine; for they are reigning Sins only that carry Souls to Hell; they are only beloved Sins, that shut Persons out of Heaven. But, blessed be God, this is not my Case; for I hate it, and desire my Hatred of Sin may grow continually. I do not yield my self a Servant of Sin; but from my Heart I yield my self a Servant of God.

III. I conclude I have spiritual Life; because I sometimes feel in my Soul Hungring and Thirsting after God and Jesus Christ, and his Grace; surely these must proceed from a Sense of spiritual Want, which is an Evidence of spiritual Life. I sometimes tast and relish the Word of God; it is Bread, it is my Food, it is more to me than my necessary Food, it is Honey to my Tast. I conclude

clude therefore, that I have spiritual Life. *Rom. viii. 5, 6. They that are after the Flesh, do mind [i. e. savour] the things of the Flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit: For to be carnally minded is Death; but to be spiritually minded is Life and Peace. And I have these Reasons to conclude, that I have spiritual Hunger and Thirst; and that I have therefore spiritual Life.*

1. I cannot be satisfied with the highest and best Enjoyments of this World, without Jesus Christ, and his Grace and Favour. *Psal. iv. 7. There be many that say, who will shew us any Good? But the Voice of my Heart is, Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance on us. The World's Good is not the chief Good; it is not a Portion large enough for me; but one God in Christ is so, and nothing else. I esteem his Favour as Life, and his loving Kindness better than Life, with all that is valuable in it, Psal. lxiii. 3. Spiritual Hunger and Thirst cannot be allayed, but by something that is proper for, and well suited to answer the spiritual Wants of the Soul: Houses and Lands, Gold and Silver, will not do it; it must be Bread and Water of Life. If God gives me any of this World's Good, I receive it with Thankfulness; for I am unworthy of the least of his Mercies; but I cannot rest in, or be put off with these things.*

2. Those Duties of Religion, or those Ordinances of Jesus Christ, wherein I have obtained some Satisfaction to my spiritual Hunger and Thirst, are exceeding pleasant to my Soul. I love all the Word, Works, Ways, and Ordinances of God; and yet I cannot but set an especial Mark on those Parts of the Word of God, and on those Ordinances and Seasons, wherein I have met with any thing of God in Christ, and have been refreshed and strengthened. Hunger and Thirst are exceeding troublesome to Nature; that therefore

which gives Relief, will be very sweet to the Taste; so are the Word and Ordinances of God to my Soul, whence I can heartily join in such Expressions as these: *O how do I love thy Law! [thy whole revealed Will.] His Mouth is most sweet. I will never forget thy Precepts; for with them thou hast quickned me.*

3. Sometimes I am glad when the Meal-time is near; when I am about to come to *the Feast of fat Things*. Natural Hunger will not easily suffer a Man to omit a Meal; nor am I willing to omit one Opportunity for obtaining spiritual Food. But it grieves me, that my Soul is not always so in Health, as *to thirst for God, for the living God, to come and appear before God. That I might go to the Altar of God, and to God my exceeding Joy.*

4. I am sometimes thankful to God for the least Crumbs of the Childrens Bread, any Testimonies of God's especial Favour to my Soul; and yet I cannot be satisfied with, now and then, a little Taste, much less with once for all; for I see I need to eat and drink abundantly, again and again. My tasting of the Bread of Life, increases my Hunger; and my drinking of the Water of Life, increases my Thirst: When I have tasted, the Language of my Soul is, *Lord, evermore give us of this Bread. Lord, give me of this Water, that I thirst not, [i. e. after earthly things.]*

IV. I conclude I have spiritual Life; because when I am most under Doubts and Fears, and am afraid to call God, *my Lord and my God*; or to reckon the Blessings of the new Covenant my own; even then my Soul breaths and longs after God and Jesus Christ, I cannot be satisfied without him; my Heart's Desires work towards him, and even then I am careful of, and thoroughly determined to keep his Laws. *Psal. cxix. 55. I have remembered thy Name, O Lord, in the Night, and have kept thy Law. Isai. xxvi. 9. With my Soul have I desired*

find thee in the Night ; yea, with my Spirit within me will I seek thee early. These are my Evidences of spiritual Life ; whence I perswade my self, that I shall obtain eternal Life.

The *third* Evidence for Heaven is, because I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ ; for God hath declared, that *he that believeth shall be saved.* That I do believe with a justifying Faith, I satisfy my self thus :

I. I heartily approve of, and consent to God's Way of Salvation of Sinners, through Faith in Jesus Christ, and utterly reject all other Ways of Salvation ; and am heartily willing to give God in Christ all the Glory of my whole Salvation, as it is due to him alone. *Psal. cxv. 1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us ; but to thy Name, be all the Glory ; for thy Mercy, &c.*

II. Because, as a poor, guilty, unclean Creature, in a perishing Condition, unable to help my self, I come to Jesus Christ, and to God by him, upon the Calls of the Gospel, and I receive and rest on him alone for Righteousness and Salvation. I cast my Soul and its Concerns on him, as able and ready to save a wretched, worthless Sinner. *Heb. vii. 25. Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost, them that come to God by him ; because he ever liveth to make Intercession for them.* *1 Tim. i. 15. This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am chief.* If therefore the holy Law of God shall call for Satisfaction, I will refer it to Jesus Christ, to whose perfect Righteousness I fly, to answer for me. If it calls for Obedience, I heartily own my self under the Law, as a Rule of Life ; and I look to Jesus Christ for Wisdom to know, and for Grace and Strength to do his Will ; for I glory in this, that *in the Lord I have Righteousness and Strength.* *Isai. lxi. 10. I will greatly*

ly rejoice in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation; he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness.

III. I esteem the Lord Jesus Christ precious; hence I conclude, that I believe in him; for to them that believe, he is precious. Once he appear'd to me without Form or Comeliness: I saw nothing desirable in him, even after I had often heard of his Excellencies; but now mine Eyes have seen him, I have seen the King in his Beauty; and he appears to me, as he is truly in himself, the chiefest of ten Thousands, and altogether lovely. He is worthy to be the Desire of all Nations: He is the chief Desire of my Soul.

IV. I conclude I believe in Jesus Christ; for I desire my Soul may be sanctified, as well as my Sins pardoned, and I look to Jesus Christ for both. I find that Faith hath some Influence on my Soul for Holiness; for it is in some Measure changed: I hate Sin, I love God as he is holy; I love Holiness, and all that are holy, with all the Means of it.

V. I perswade my self that I believe; for I heartily submit to all the Laws and Government of Jesus Christ, as well as desire to obtain the good things contained in the Promises. As God hath given me his Commands as a Rule of Life, so I take Care to keep them, and therein to walk with God; for what he commands, I like and chuse; and am careful, that my Conversation may be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, and conform'd to the Example of Christ.

The fourth Evidence for Heaven is, that my Sins are pardoned. And I satisfy my self, that my Sins, though many and great, are forgiven; for,

I. I am effectually called by the Word and Spirit of God. I had often heard of the Danger of Sin, but lived in it. I had often heard of my Duty, but neglected it. But at last the Spirit of God, by his Law, convinced me of Sin, that I was, by Nature and Practice, a guilty, filthy Creature, lost and undone in my self, void of all that is good, not able to help my self out of my miserable Condition by Sin, wherein I was every Moment liable to eternal Misery; then *the Gospel came, not in Word only, but in Power, and in the Holy Ghost*. By this I obtained the Knowledge of Christ, his Authority from the Father to save lost Sinners; his Ability for that Work; that he is the only Saviour; that he is willing and ready to save the very chief of Sinners, that come to God by him. Herewith the Spirit of God made me heartily willing to submit to, and rest on the Lord Jesus Christ, for the Salvation of my Soul. And as I have often done it since, so, even now, I heartily chuse and embrace him for mine; and do yield up my self to him, and desire to be governed by him. With my Heart I speak it, *Lo, O Lord, I come unto thee; for thou art the Lord my God.*

II. I heartily confess my Sins to God, with all their aggravating Circumstances; and while I confess them, I make no Reserve of Sin; but as I confess all known Sins, so it is my hearty Desire to forsake all Sin. *1 John i. 9. If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness. Prov. xxviii. 13. He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall find Mercy.*

III. I conclude my Sins are pardoned; for I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. *Acts xiii. 39. He that believeth, is justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the Law of Moses.*

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My Faith indeed is but weak, but I am justified on my first Act of Faith on Jesus Christ, though it is never so weak; for Justification is not suspended till Faith is strong; nor is Justification imperfect, because Faith, the Instrument, may be so; for it is not Faith it self, but that which Faith looks to, and takes hold of, that is the Matter of a believing Sinner's Justification before God; therefore the weakest Believer in the Family of God is justified, as well as the strongest. *1 John ii. 12. I write unto you, little Children; because your Sins are forgiven you for his Name's sake.* Therefore by the same Arguments, whence I may warrantably perswade my self, that I have true Faith; by the same I may assure my self, that my Sins are pardoned, and by the same also I am assured of Heaven. *Rom. viii. 30. Whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

IV. I conclude my Sins are pardoned; for I hate Sin, and love Holiness, with whatsoever tends to destroy Sin, or promote Sanctification on my Soul. If I hate Sin, then I am not under the Dominion of Sin; and that is an Evidence that my Sins are pardoned; for where the Power of Sin is taken away, the Guilt of Sin is also removed.

V. I perswade my self that my Sins are forgiven; because I find I have obtained many other Blessings of the new Covenant; of which Pardon of Sin is a Part. Of which after.

Thus being clothed with the Righteousness of Jesus Christ by Faith, *I have on the wedding Garment*; and when I appear before God, he will know it, and own it, and me as clothed with it, Blessed be God for Jesus Christ and his Righteousness, I desire to be found in it, as the Apostle Paul did, *Phil. iii. 9.* and to make mention of his Righteousness, and of that only. As David,
Psal.

Pfal. vii. 16. I will go in the Strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy Righteousness, and of thine only. This is my Ground of Boldness at the Throne of Grace, and this is the Foundation of my Hope of Glory.

The *fifth* Evidence for Heaven is; because God is become my Covenant-God and Portion. And I have these following Reasons to take up this comfortable Conclusion:

I. Because I know the Lord so as to trust in him. *Pfal. ix. 10. They that know thy Name, will put their Trust in thee.* This Knowledge is put among the choice Covenant-Mercies, *Jer. xxxi. 31. I find my Heart drawn to God in Jesus Christ; I come to him, I rest on him for all. But of this before.*

II. I chuse God in Christ for my God and Portion, and I sincerely give up my self to be the Lord's in Body and Spirit. I can heartily join sometimes with those Children of God, *Lam. iii. 24. The Lord is my Portion, saith my Soul. Psal. lxxiii. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee; and there is none on Earth that I desire in Comparison of thee.* If I have chosen God for mine, I may be sure he hath chosen me for his; for he is always before Hand with his People. *We love him, because he first loved us; and we chuse him, because he first chose us.* Thus I may say, *my Beloved is mine, and I am his.* I am well satisfied with my Portion, it is large, pleasant, suitable and sure; but I cannot be satisfied with any Portion short of him. This World hath often promised me largely, to bespeak my Affections; but hath often deceived me, and I thank my God that it hath done so; for had it always kept its Word with me, I know not whither my Heart and Affections might have run, and where they might have taken up their Rest; but now I trust, through Grace, that
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though it should be better to me than all its Promises; I shall not rest in it; for I have given my Heart and all to God in Jesus Christ, and desire my Affections may be taken up with those things that the World can neither give, nor take away from me.

III. I conclude I am in Covenant with God; because he hath put his Spirit within me; for that's one among the many Covenant-Promises. *Ezek. xxxvi. 26. I will put my Spirit within you.* And I have these Reasons to believe I have obtained that Promise;

1. Because he sometimes assists me at the Throne of Grace, *as the Spirit of Grace in Supplication.*

2. Because he works in my Soul as the Spirit of Holiness, weakening Sin, and enabling me to die to Sin, and live unto Righteousness.

3. I find my Soul inclin'd to walk in the Statutes of God, which none are inclin'd to do, till the Spirit of God is put within them. *Ezek. xxxvi. 27. I will put my Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my Statutes, and they shall keep my Commandments, and do them.*

IV. I conclude I am in Covenant with God; because the Laws of God are written in my Heart. That is another Covenant-Promise, *Jer. xxxi. 33.* And I have these Reasons to perswade my self, that I have obtained this Covenant-Mercy.

1. My Heart approves of, and consents to the Laws, or whole revealed Will of God, as *holy, just, and good.* I dislike what it condemns; I hate every false Way, and am careful to avoid them, and pray for Help against them.

2. I love the whole Word of God; I desire it should dwell much in my Heart and Thoughts: I love to hear it, and am grieved that I can remember no more of it when I have heard it; I love to read and meditate on it; it is that which I often chuse for the Subject of my Thoughts.

Psal.

Psal. cxix. 97. O, how do I love thy Law, it is my Meditation all the Day, [or often in the Day, or every Day.] In all my Streights I fly to it; it is my Comfort amidst the Multitude of my Thoughts within me. It is my Food, Jer. xv. 16. Thy Word was found, and I did eat it; and it was to me the Joy and Rejoycing of my Heart. It is my Treasure, my Portion is in it; sometimes I have been able to say, It is better to me than Thousands of Gold and Silver.

3. I strive to yield universal Obedience to the Laws of God. As God hath appointed them to be to every Believer a Rule of Life, so I heartily embrace them: Hence I conclude, that I have an Interest in the Promises; for at what Time God gives to any a Title to the Promises, he also gives them an hearty Love to his Laws, and a diligent Care and serious Concern about Holiness, agreeable to that Exhortion, 2 Cor. vii. 1. *Having these Promises, dearly Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, and perfect Holiness in the Fear of God.*

V. I conclude I am in Covenant with God; because he hath taken away the Heart of Stone, and given me an Heart of Flesh; according to that Covenant-Promise, *Ezek. xxxvi. 26. My Reasons, that I have obtained this Mercy, are such as these:*

1. My Heart was once a hard, senseless, earthly, barren, lifeless Heart; and then the Word, or Providences of God, made very little Impression upon it; but now it is more tender and teachable, and more ready to observe every Hint of the Will of God, from his Word and Providences, than it used to be.

2. If Corruptions are discern'd to be at Work, though they are got no further than the Thoughts of the Heart, I bewail them before God, and am
grieved

grieved for them, and ask Help of God against them. *Psal. lxxxvi. 11. Unite my Heart to fear thy Name.*

3. I find my Heart inclin'd to fall in with the revealed Will of God in every Thing; *to walk with the Lord fully, like Caleb and Joshua, Josh. xiv. 24. who are said to have another Heart.*

4. I find the Desires of my Soul working towards Heaven. They do not center in the Earth, as a stony Heart doth; which, though it may, like a Stone, be forced upwards, by the Word, or some awakening Providence of God, yet quickly makes to the Earth again; because it is its proper Center. These are some of my Hopes of Heaven. God is my Covenant-God; therefore all Covenant-Mercies are mine; and having done me this Honour, *God is not ashamed to be called my God: O wondrous Grace!* I am ashamed of my self, my Heart, my Thoughts, my Prayers, my religious Exercises, and that I am no more affected with the Riches of free Grace, and my own Mercies. Surely I have no Reason to be ashamed of the Ways, the Work, and Service of God, or of my Portion; but to glory in it, and live upon it; for it will not disappoint me, if I should be stript of my worldly Comforts, Friends, Relations, &c. I have my God and Portion still to go to; when the Streams are dry, the Fountain will not fail me. The Creatures are uncertain; they that shew Friendship to Day, may be Enemies to Morrow; they that make us Promises to Day, may change their Minds to Morrow; but God is, and will be my Portion for ever. They that have this World for a Portion, may quickly know the utmost Bounds of it; but I shall never know the Extent of mine; and it is as suitable as it is large, and it will endure for ever. *Psal. lxxiii. 24. The Lord is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever. I have but little*

little of this World; but I have him for my own; whose are all things; he is my Life, my Food, my Riches, my Honour, my Refuge, my Comfort, my Friend, my Father, my Home, and everlasting Habitation.

The *sixth* Evidence for Heaven is, because I am an adopted Child of God. That this is my Mercy, I gather from such things as these:

I. Because I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. *John i. 12. As many as received him, to them gave he the Power to become the Sons of God, even as many as believed on his Name. Gal. iii. 26. Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus.*

II. Because I love the Lord Jesus Christ. All the Children of God love Jesus Christ. *John viii. 42. If God were your Father, ye would love me. I find in my Heart I love the Lord Jesus Christ, and am troubled I love him no more; but I love him sincerely; therefore I conclude that I am one of God's Children.*

III. Because God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into my Heart. *Gal. iv. 6. Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying Abba, Father.*

IV. Because I love all the Children of God. *1 John iv. 7. Beloved, let us love one another; for Love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. Those that bear the Image of God, I count them the Excellent of the Earth, Psal. xvi. 3. my Delight is in them.*

V. I look to God, as Children to a Father, for Teaching to know his Will, that I may observe and do it. In every Condition this is my Enquiry, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

I run to him for Protection, as injured Children run into the Arms of their Father for Safety. And I look to him for a Child's Portion of Grace here, and Glory hereafter.

VI. I take Care to behave my self suitable to this high and honourable Relation, as God expects of all that call him Father. *Mal. i. 6. If I be a Father, where is my Honour?* I take Care to honour God in my Life, by submitting to his Word and Providences, and labouring to imitate him; according to that Charge, *Eph. v. 1. Be ye Followers of God, as dear Children.* I desire to honour God in my very Thoughts; I would not willingly entertain one low, or dishonourable Thought of God in my Heart. From all which I conclude, I am one of God's adopted Children. And being a Child of God, I am an Heir with Jesus Christ of eternal Life. *Gal. iv. 7. Wherefore thou art no more a Servant, but a Son; and if a Son, then an Heir of God through Christ. Rom. viii. 17. And if Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ.*

This Mercy assures me, that I shall see Jesus Christ as he is, and be made more like him. *1 John iii. 2. Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* This is a promised Mercy, every Way as large and suitable as I need it; for,

1. Then this vile Body shall be made like to Christ's glorious Body. *Phil. iii. 21. Who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body.*

2. My Soul shall be perfected in Grace. Now I know but in Part; but then I shall know, even as I am known. What I have received, are but first Fruits of the Spirit, and the Author of Grace will perfect that which concerneth me.

3. I am now espoused to Jesus Christ; and tho' I am yet in a strange Land, my heavenly Father will take me Home to his own House; which is also mine by the Father's Gift, and by the Purchase and Preparation of Jesus Christ. O how gloriously shall

shall I be adorn'd at the Appearing of Christ; *Psal. xlv. 13, 14, 15.* Then I shall be possessed of that which never entred into the Heart of Man to conceive. This our Lord Jesus Christ hath prayed for. *John xvii. 24. Father, I will that those also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory.* This will make me meet for the Work and Entertainments of Heaven. When I think what Heaven is, and what its Work and Enjoyments are, and how little Meetness I have for either, I comfort my self that my heavenly Father will make me *meet to be Partaker of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* And this will compleatly do it; we shall see him [i. e. Jesus Christ,] *as he is.*

The *seventh* Evidence for Heaven is, because I am, in some Measure, truly sanctified. This is the Order in which God brings his Sons to Glory. *2 Theff. ii. 13. Chosen to Salvation through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth.* And I have these Reasons to believe that I am truly sanctified.

I. I desire all Sin may be discover'd and destroy'd. While an un sanctify'd Person speaks against Sin, he reserves in his Heart a Purpose to hold fast some Sins. If he prays against Sin, he is afraid God should hear him; but while I confess my Sins to God, I desire to part with all Sin.

II. I hate all Sin. I do not live without it; but when I sin, it is far from being my Meat, and Drink, and Musick; what I do in Sin, I allow not; yea, I loath Sin, and my self for Sin. *Ezek. xx. 41.* I conclude therefore, that I am not under the Power of Sin; and this is to me one Evidence of my Sanctification.

III. I heartily delight in Holiness wherever I find it, either in my self, or others. I labour to promote it in my Heart and Life, by all appoint-

ed Means. *When I would do Good, Evil is present with me ; but the Desire of my Soul is to do nothing that is Evil, but always that which is Good.*

IV. I favour the things that are of God ; I can tast and relish the Word of God. *It is sweet to my Tast, sweeter than Honey to my Mouth.*

V. My Soul is inclined to universal, perpetual Obedience to God and Jesus Christ. I heartily own him to be my Lord ; and I study in all things to approve my self his sincere Subject. I can heartily say to him, what is the Voice of sanctified Souls, *Isai. xxvi. 13. O Lord our God, other Lords besides thee have had Dominion over us ; but now by thee only will we make mention of thy Name.*

VI. I find my Desires and Delights turn'd quite another Way than once they were :

1. I do not chiefly desire the good things of this World, but God in Christ, and his especial Favour. *Psal. iv. 7. There be many that say, who will shew us any Good ? but [the Language of my Soul is] Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon us.*

2. I cannot desire the Absence, but the Presence of God. My Language now to God is not, *Depart from us, we desire not the Knowledge of his Ways ; but, O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come, even to his Seat.*

3. I delight in the Work and Service, in the Ways and Ordinances of God. His Work is my Meat and Drink, and I count his Service my perfect Freedom. I love the revealed Will of God, that shews me my Work and Way, and desire my Soul may be better prepared to observe, and do the Will of God sincerely, universally, and constantly.

The eighth Evidence for Heaven is, because I love God. Indeed, I do not love him as I desire

to do ; but I have these Reasons to conclude that I love God in Sincerity.

I. The Laws of God are not grievous to me. *John v. 3. This is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous.* My Heart approves of them; I do not cast any of them behind my Back; nor do I allow of, or love a Thought that is contrary to the holy Laws of God. I do not pick and chuse here and there, for some of the easiest Parts of the true Christian's Work; but I have respect to them all, *Psal. cxix. 6.* I know I keep them poorly; yet my Conscience is Witness, that I am sincere in Obedience.

II. I greatly rejoice in any sensible Expressions of God's Love and Favour to my Soul; they are my Food, my Strength, and my Life. I set my Seal to those Testimonies of the Lovers of God, *Psal. xxx. 5. In his Favour is Life. Psal. lxiii. 3. His loving Kindness is better than Life.* I delight in his Presence, and am grieved at his Absence. And I bless God, I know what they mean, when he shews, and when he hides his Face.

III. I am grieved when God is dishonoured by my self, or others; tho', I confess, I am not always a-like concern'd at Heart for my own, or others Sins. I count God's Interest my own, and the Enemies of God my Enemies, *Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22.* I do not wish them any Evil; for I heartily pray for their Souls Good, and am ready to do them any Service for their Bodies, or Estates; but though they should be my own Relations, I think the worse of them, as they are Enemies to God.

IV. I love all the Children of God, for the Father's sake, and for the Grace of God in them, and the Image of God upon them; though they are not, in all things, of my Opinion. I cannot bear to hear them scoffed at, and reproached, and
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their Names abused. Those that honour God, by trusting in him, and obeying of him, I honour them with my very Heart, I can do any thing for them; I look on them with quite another Eye, than I do on graceless Persons, though those should be never so poor, and these never so rich. These Children of God, I count *the Excellent of the Earth*; my Delight is in them; my Heart is drawn out to love them, as soon as I understand that they love God. In this I take some Comfort; for none can love another for God's sake, unless they love God.

V. I find my Heart ready to put a favourable Construction on whatsoever God is pleas'd to do with me, and mine, in the Course of his Providence. I believe he doth all things well; and I am perswaded, that he doth all things best for me. *Love thinketh no Evil*. And I believe my God and Father means me no Harm by all my Afflictions, Crosses, and Disappointments; for he hath said, *Verily, I will do thee Good*. And I believe him, and am willing to leave him to his own Way, to bring about that promised Good. From hence I gather these three Things:

First, That God loves me; for we love him, because he first loved us. My Love to him is but a Fruit of his Love to me.

Secondly, That all things do, and shall work together for my Good, *Rom. viii. 28. We know that all things work together for Good to them that love God*. And I know it, particularly with respect to the Afflictions, or at least some of them, that I have pass'd under.

1. They have been the Candle of the Lord, to shew me more of my Heart and Life; and thereby have serv'd to humble me.

2. By them I have learn'd more Resignation to the Will of God, and to justify him in his Proceedings with me.

3. They

3. They have been of good Use to keep me back from Sin, and put me more on the necessary Work of Watching and Praying; I have made but poor, cold Work of Prayer sometimes, till God awaken'd me by some Affliction or other.

4. I have hereby learned more experimentally, what God is in his Perfections; how his Power can uphold; how he hates Sin; how he fulfils his faithful Word; how wise and gracious he is in his Conduct.

5. Afflictions have made me more attentive to the Word of God, and the Word more savoury to me. Good Food is very delightful to hungry Stomachs; so is heavenly Manna to hungry Souls; such cannot count it *light Bread*.

6. They have cured me of much of my Lightness and Vanity, and made me more serious in Religion. Thus *out of the Eater came forth Meat*, for the Health and Strength of my Soul.

Thirdly, I gather also from my Love to God, that I shall enjoy what God hath prepared for his Children in Heaven; for they are laid up for those that love God. 1 Cor. ii. 9. *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him.* James ii. 5. *The Kingdom which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

The *ninth* Evidence for Heaven is, that I love the Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity. And I have these Reasons to conclude that I love him:

I. Because I open my very Heart to him; and desire that Jesus Christ should have the entire Possession and Government of it; and that nothing should dwell there that is displeasing to him.

II. I love the Word of God; because it treats so much of Jesus Christ. I love all the Ordinances of God; because they are his appointed Means to

hold Communion with him, and to grow in Likeness to him; both which I much desire. I love to be near him; therefore I esteem *one Day in his Courts better than a thousand elsewhere.*

III. I love them that love Jesus Christ; but I cannot bear them that are Evil; I do not delight in, or chuse their Company and Conversation, any further than I may serve their Souls, in the Places and Business where the Providence of God calls me. But I love the Company of such as love, and walk with Jesus Christ. *Psal. cxix. 63. I am a Companion of all them that fear thee.*

IV. I love to hear Souls enquiring after Jesus Christ, and professing their Faith in, and Subjection to him. I would have all know him, and be interested in him.

V. I earnestly desire more Love in my Heart to Jesus Christ. I am troubled that I am no more taken with him; therefore I cry to the Author of Grace, *Lord, increase our Faith; Lord, help my Unbelief.* For I am perswaded, if I had more Faith in Jesus Christ, I should have more Love to him; for *Faith worketh by Love.* Our Love to Christ will bear Proportion to our Faith in him.

VI. My great Care is, to act and walk according to the Commands and Example of Jesus Christ. *John xiv. 21. He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* And I am concern'd to imitate the Lord Jesus Christ, in unfeigned Humility, Heavenly-mindedness, Zeal for God's Glory, and Care for the Salvation of precious Souls.

Hence I gather these comfortable Truths:

First, that Jesus Christ loves me. *Prov. viii. 17. I love them that love me.* They are the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly,

Secondly, That Jesus Christ gave himself for me; Gal. ii. 20. *Who loved me, and gave himself for me.* And I have these Reasons for my Conclusion:

I. Because I am one of the called Sheep of Jesus Christ. John x. 11. *The good Shepherd giveth his Life for the Sheep.* I find their Characters on my self, Ver. 4, 5. It's said of them, that *they hear, and know the Voice of Christ; and that they know not the Voice of Strangers, nor will they follow them; but they follow the Lord Jesus Christ.*

II. I find the Characters of the Redeemed on me. Rev. xiv. They are thus described:

1. *They are with the Lamb upon Mount Sion, Ver. 1. And they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, Ver. 4.* As the Lord Jesus Christ walks in the midst of the golden Candlesticks, it is my Care to walk with him in a diligent Observation of all his Ordinances; and I am willing to be at his Disposal in all things.

2. It is said of the Redeemed, that *they have their Father's Name written in their Foreheads.* And I take Care, that my Conversation may declare to all, that I am one of the Children of God, by my constant Practice of Religion and Godliness.

3. It is said of them, that *they are first Fruits unto God.* I look on my self as such; for I dedicate my self to God, and to his Service, desiring and purposing to be his for ever.

4. It is said of the Redeemed, that *they have no Guile in their Mouths.* My Conscience testifies for me, that I am truly at Heart, what I desire to make a Shew of before others. I hate Sin, while I speak against it. I am careful to walk with God in secret, as well as attend on him in publick Ordinances. I confess with Shame, that sometimes my Thoughts are vain, unbelieving, and blasphemous; but they are my Grief and Trouble; I
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bewail them before God, and ask his Help against them; for I desire not to hide a Thought from him; but as I my self search my Heart, so I desire that God would search me. *Psal. xxvi. 2. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my Reins and my Heart. I love searching Truths, and a searching Ministry, of which it may be said, as the Woman did of Christ, John iv. 29. Come, see a Man that told me all things that ever I did. And such a Ministry as is like the Sun in its Course; of which it is said, Psal. xix. 6. Nothing is hid from the Heat thereof.*

5. It is said of the Redeemed, that *they are without Fault before the Throne of God.* Considered in my self, I am not without Fault; for I am a sinful Creature, I sin every Day; and yet I apply this to my self; for being cloathed with the perfect Righteousness of Jesus Christ, God now beholds me in him without Spot, and will behold me without Fault before the Throne of God. O, blessed be God for Jesus Christ, and his perfect Righteousness.

III. I gather from hence, that I shall never be separated from the Love of Jesus Christ. *Rom. viii. 38, 39. For I am perswaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor Heighth, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

IV. Upon the whole: I conclude, that I shall go to Heaven, there to be filled with Grace, and satisfied with Glory. *Prov. viii. 21. That I may cause them that love me to inherit Substance, and I will fill their Treasures.*

T H E

Conclusion.

NOW, believing Reader, if thou art still in Doubt about thy Estate, remember that when thy Comforts are gone, thy Covenant-Interest in God is not gone. A Soul may be nearest to Jesus Christ, in humble Trust and Dependance, and strongest Desires, when it is most in the Dark; as the Moon when at the Change, hath least Light; yet it is nearer the Sun, than when it is at the Full. Thou mayest say of thy Soul, when out of Frame, as *David* did of his House, *2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Although my House be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; and this is all my Salvation.* For thy Salvation doth not depend upon thy Comforts. Weeping may endure for a Night; but Joy cometh in the Morning. Search out the Occasion, and pray for God's Return. *Psal. xxxv. 3. Say to my Soul, I am thy Salvation.* *Cant. viii. 6. Set me as a Seal upon thy Heart, as a Seal upon thy Arm; for Love is strong as Death, Jealousy is cruel as the Grave,*

Grave, the Coals thereof are Coals of Fire, which hath a most vehement Flame. Psal. li. 12. Restore to me the Joy of thy Salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit.

If thou art a true Believer, this thou mayest take Comfort in, that though the Spirit of God is not working in thy Soul at present, as the Comforter; yet he is still working in thee as the Spirit of Grace: And this thou may'st take for an Evidence of it, that thou canst not chuse but mourn over his Absence, and long for his Return.

But if thy Evidences for Heaven are clear, have a Care of blurring them. Beware of Sin; shun all Appearance of Evil; watch against Satan's Temptations. *Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat.* This was spoken to the Disciples, after they had received some especial Mark of Christ's Favour. But, though Satan and Corruption are strong, hold on, you are assured of Victory; for the Battle is the Lord's. The Captain of our Salvation is stronger than the Giants in the Way; and the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, stronger than the roaring Lion of Hell. Quench not the Spirit; beware of Security; say not, because of thy present Comforts, *My Mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved.* Neglect no religious Exercises, nor suffer thy self to be formal in it. Be not slothful in Business; but fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord. Take this for a certain Rule, that if thy Assurance, or suppos'd Assurance of Heaven, does not make thee careful about the Practice of Holiness, and bind thee close to thy Duty towards God and Men, in God's House, and in thy several Relations, it is all a Cheat. 2 Cor. vii. 1. *Having these Promises, Dearly Beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, and perfect Holiness in the Fear of God.* 1 John iii. 3. *He that hath this Hope*

in him, purifieth himself as God is pure. Whatsoever thy Attainments and Enjoyments are, take Care to live by the Faith of the Son of God; for Comforts to the believing Soul are sent, as Clusters of Grapes brought over into the Wilderness, not that we may be satisfied with a Tast, and with First-Fruits of Grace and Heaven. But that the Tast might whet our Desires after full and uninterrupted Enjoyment; for thus we should reason with our selves: If these Crumbs are so sweet, what will the full Provision of my Father's House be! If one Smile of Christ's Face be so delightful, what will the full Vision of Jesus Christ in Glory be! Though our heavenly Father spreads a Table for us in the Wilderness, yet we should have our Eyes and Hearts towards the holy Land. Hath God given thee Grace, and hast thou some good Hopes of Heaven through Grace? Then fail not to stir up thy Soul to bless and praise the God of Grace, *Psal. ciii. beginning. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits: Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, who healeth all thy Diseases, who redeemeth thy Life from Destruction, who crowneth thee with loving Kindness, and tender Mercies; who satisfieth thy Mouth with good Things, &c.*

If these are thy own Mercies, consider their Greatness, and thy own Unworthiness of them; that thou mayest be more affected with God's great Condescension towards thee, and with thy own happy Estate.

Hence also thou mayest learn Contentment in every Condition. If thou hast but little of this World's Good; yet remember, that thou hast the chief Good, and therein thy Condition is far happier than Thousands of the Nobles of the Earth; thou art rich in Faith, and an Heir of a Kingdom. If the World hates thee, yet God loves thee.

thee. Be content with thy Lot ; for the Lines are fallen to thee in pleasant Places, thou hast a goodly Heritage. Thy Estate does not consist of corruptible things, but incorruptible, that fade not away ; such things as the World cannot give, nor take away from thee. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ, and the Security of all our Portion in him : To him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

T H E E N D.



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